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Appln. No.: 09/866,587

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 1 and 18 as follows.

1. (Currently Amended) A diffractive optical element, comprising:
a periodic first blazed type grating portion and a periodic second blazed type grating portion which is arranged on a light exit side of the first blazed type grating portion, wherein
the first blazed type grating portion and the second blazed type grating portion are each formed by a plurality of grating sections, and a pair of grating sections corresponding to each other in each periodic first and second blazed type grating portions has the same period P_t , and
each of the grating sections forming at least one of the first blazed type grating portion and the second blazed type grating portion is formed by a sub-wavelength structured grating having a period p_l smaller than the period P_t , with the period p_l being smaller than a wavelength of a light beam used, and
wherein polarized light beams are diffracted by the first blazed type grating portion and the second blazed type grating portion at a specific diffraction order.

2. (Original) A diffractive optical element according to claim 1, wherein said diffractive optical element is structured such that within an entire region of used wavelengths, diffraction directions are made different from each other, depending upon a